

THE-ICONOMIST © "TO CONSUME" "TO WASTE"

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n.6
">still?life?<"

THE-ICONOMIST © Wednesday, 1 January 2025, "TO CONSUME" "TO WASTE"

n. 6, vol. II
"<still>?life?>"



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HI@THE-ICONOMIST.NET
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THE CONCEPT OF "ICONOMY" ORIGINATED AS A NEOLOGISM COINED IN 2006 BY ECONOMIST GILSON SCHWARTZ. SCHWARTZ JUDGED THAT "IN THIS ICONOMY, THE NOMS IS DEFINED BY THE ICON, BY SOMETHING THAT IS TANGIBLE, WHICH IS A VISUAL, IMMATERIAL, REAL AND SYMBOLIC CODE AT THE SAME TIME… OF THIS ICONOMY THAT MESSES WITH OUR WAY OF THINKING, MEASURING AND FEELING. LOOKS LIKE A GAME.

point-of-no-return

Every-little-thing-that-brought-us-here. At first glance, nothing makes sense. A whirlwind of shapes, materials, and disconnected functions. It's necessary to stop. Look. Listen. It's necessary to see with attention. Is this everything we've produced so far? A hairdryer rests on the wooden leg of a 19th-century desk. Remnants of utilities that once served us. Is this what you need? A worn SUV tire, eroded by the speed of consumption. An obsolete internet modem, still blinking in an unbreakable loop. Electrical cables without purpose, twisted like the branches of extinct trees. A manual on how to build "eco-friendly" underground bunker — the ultimate paradox. A shipment of industrial waste, neatly packed for export. Boxes of books ready to be shredded into recyclable confetti. A ton of jacquard coats, stitched for no one to wear, prepared for the flames. A pile of debranded sneakers, awaiting their transformation into black smoke rising against the sky. Plastic permeates everything. A plastic chair that will never absorb human warmth. A plastic table that will never bear the marks of cups or stories. Plastic packaging that accumulates the past, present, and future, indestructible. Perfect squares of plastic, fragments of eternity. The falsified nature: artificial flowers that never wilt, gardens melting under the same light that created them as ideal backdrops. A plastic forest collapses, stained with synthetic dyes. A pool that has never known real water. A children's park of plastic slides and swings, now relics for future archaeologists. The artificial invades the body: A plastic heart pumps silence. A stomach adapted to chew and digest microplastics. A plastic spoon dives into a plastic soup — there is no flavor, only texture. Aromas float in the air, synthetic molecules promising smells that don't exist. Fake lavender, generic vanilla, an imaginary field of freshness. A world colored by toxic dyes: A plastic egg, almost real, perfect in its sterility. Toxic-eyes. Bags and wallets echo a lost luxury, endlessly reproduced in plastic molds. Everything reflects the hues of a manufactured rainbow. What if it melted? Is it possible to melt it all and start anew? But plastic doesn't disappear — it merely changes form. The white room in the center displays a mountain of disconnected objects. What separates them from the objects outside? Perhaps only the context. Here, they are "art." Out there, trash. Controlled ephemerality, time frozen in carbon. Mountains of things, many of them bearing the fingerprint of a creator. Who has the courage to decipher them? Plastic gloves. Oxygen masks. Tools of a world on the brink of collapse. It's necessary to look into the abyss or into the black hole that will consume everything — everything we've produced until now. Is it all one piece? A visual tragedy waiting to be read. Still life? **ti.**

{1kg}per_4_day()

({380kg}=per_5_year)

The amount of waste generated by an individual annually varies according to region and consumption habits. In Brazil, recent data indicates that each resident produces, on average, about 380 kg of solid waste per year, which equates to approximately 1 kg per day. In 2022, the country generated approximately 77.1 million tons of urban solid waste. The Southeast region had the highest per capita production, with around 449 kg per inhabitant per year, while the South recorded 284 kg per inhabitant, and the North generated 15,000 tons daily, representing 7.3% of the national total. Globally, urban solid waste production exceeds 2 billion tons per year, with an average of 0.74 kg per person per day. However, this average varies significantly between low-income countries, where generation is about 0.11 kg per person daily, and high-income countries, where it can reach 4.54 kg per day. It is important to note that despite the significant waste generation, Brazil's recycling rate remains low. It is estimated that less than 10% of waste is recycled, highlighting the need for improvements in selective collection and recycling systems to mitigate environmental impacts. This data underscores the importance of effective public policies and raising public awareness to reduce waste generation and increase recycling rates, aiming to minimize environmental impacts and promote sustainability.



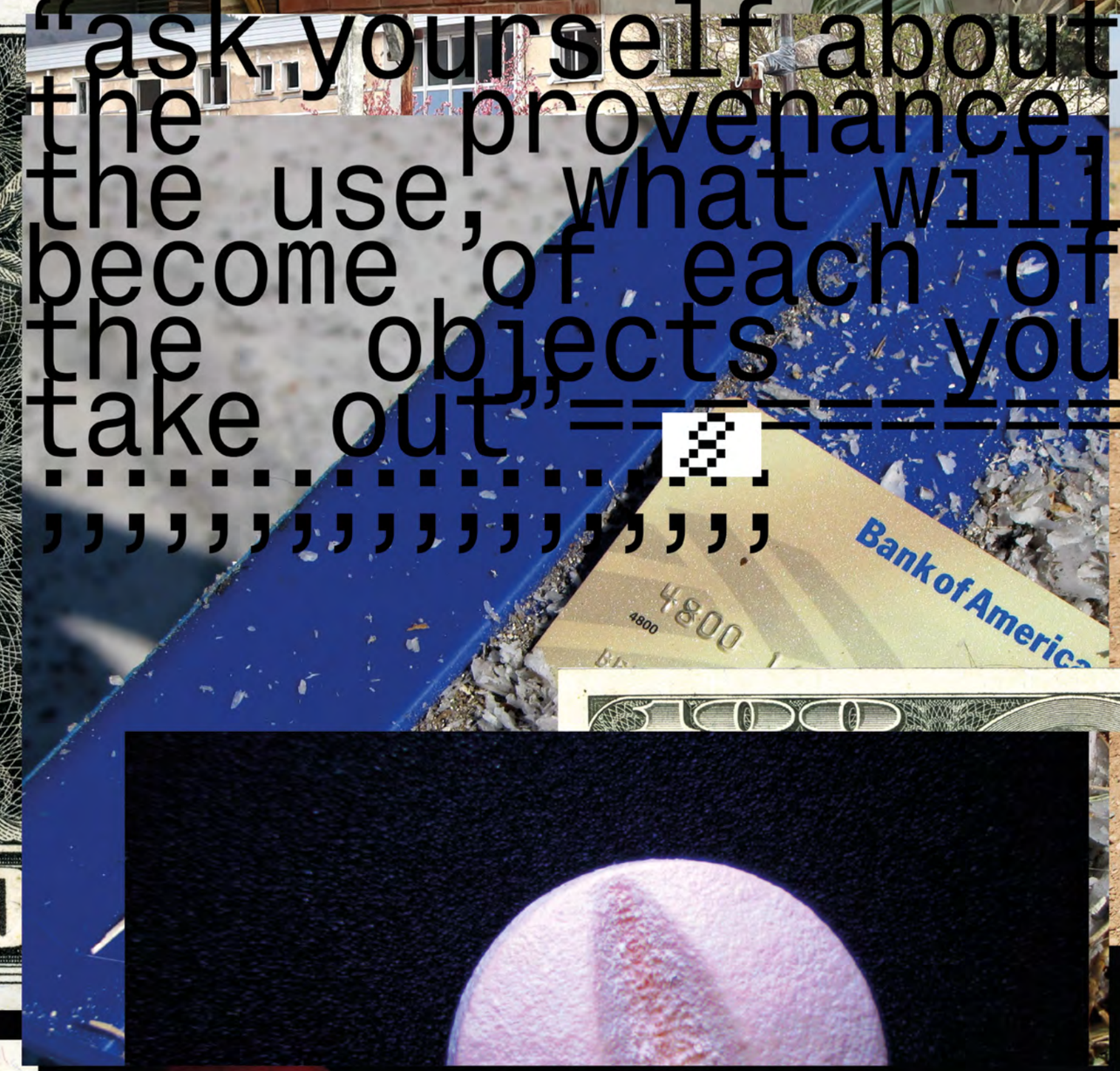


Words by YURIKO SAITO'S book EVERYDAY AESTHETICS (2007)

don't-make-beauty>>>somewhere<at>the
expense of creating ugliness-elsewhere

“ask yourself about the-infra-ordinary

“ask yourself about the provenance, the use, what will become of each of the objects you take out”









Words by GEORGES PEREC, from THE INFRA-ORDINARY (1989)

What speaks to us, seemingly, is always the big event, the extraordinary: the front-page splash, the banner headlines. Railway trains only begin to exist when they are derailed, and the more passengers that are killed, the more the trains exist. Aeroplanes achieve existence only when they are hijacked. The one and only destiny of motor-cars is to drive into plane trees. Fifty-two weekends a year, fifty- two casualty lists: so many dead and all the better for the news media if the figures keep going up! Behind the event there is a scandal, a fissure, a danger, as if life reveals itself only by way of the spectacular, as if what speaks, what is significant, is always abnormal: natural cataclysms or social upheavals, social unrest, political scandals. In our haste to measure the historic, significant and revelatory, let's not leave aside the essential: the truly intolerable, the truly inadmissible. What is scandalous isn't the pit explosion, it's working in coalmines. 'Social problems' aren't 'a matter of concern' when there's a strike, they are intolerable twenty-four hours out of twenty-four, three hundred and sixty-five days a year. Tidal waves, volcanic eruptions, tower blocks that collapse, forest fires, tunnels that cave in, the Drugstore de Champs-Elysées burns down. Awful! Terrible! Monstrous! Scandalous! But where's the scandal? The true scandal? Has the newspaper told us everything except: not to worry, as you can see life exists with its ups and downs, things happen, as you can see. The daily newspapers talk of everything except the daily. The papers annoy me , they teach me nothing. What they recount doesn't concern me, doesn't ask me questions and doesn't answer the questions I ask or would like to ask. What's really going on, what we're experiencing, the rest, all the rest, where is it? How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day and recurs everyday: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual? To question the habitual. But that's just it, we're habituated to it. We don't question it, it doesn't question us, it doesn't seem to pose a problem, we live it without thinking, as if it carried within it neither question nor answers, as if it weren't the bearer of any information. This is not longer even conditioning, it's anaesthesia. We sleep through our lives in a dreamless sleep. But where is our life? Where is our body? Where is our space? How are we to speak of these 'common things', how to track them down, rather, how to flush them out, wrest them from the dross in which they remain mired, how to give them a meaning, a tongue, to let them, finally, speak of what is, of what we are. What's needed perhaps is finally to found our own anthropology, one that will speak about us, will look in ourselves for what for so long we've been pillaging from others. Not the exotic anymore, but the endotic. To question what seems so much a matter of course that we've forgotten its origins. To rediscover something of the astonishment that Jules Verne or his readers may have felt faced with an apparatus capable of reproducing and transporting sounds. For the astonishment existed, along with thousands of others, and it's they which have moulded us. What we need to question is bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners, our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms. To question that which seems to have ceased forever to astonish us. We live, true, we breathe, true; we walk, we open doors, we go down staircases, we sit at a table in order to eat, we lie down on a bed in order to sleep. How? Why? Where? When? Why?

Describe your street. Describe another street. Compare.Make an inventory of you pockets, of your bag. Ask yourself about the provenance, the use, what will become of each of the objects you take out. Question your tea spoons. What is there under your wallpaper? How many movements does it take to dial a phone number? Why don't you find cigarettes in grocery stores? Why not? It matters little to me that these questions should be fragmentary, barely indicative of a method, at most of a project. It matters a lot to me that they should seem trivial and futile: that's exactly what makes them just as essential, if not more so, as all the other questions by which we've tried in vain to lay hold on our truth.

Inside this house many things go on. Many people. Many lives. Many personalities. Some of them dream. Some of them don't. Some of them eat. Some of them starve. Some of them cry. Some of them laugh. Some of them wake up. Some of them go to sleep. Some of them fall into their dreams. Some of them walk in their dreams. Some of them fly. Sometimes the interior of this house resembles a universe. Sometimes the movement of bodies creates a rhythm that is an exact thing like science: rotations for periods of time and then collisions. Words float like particles. Collide like meteors. Sometimes a little dog comes out of the house and makes sound and the sound carries and the sound shifts and it rises up over the treetops. There, inside this house, lives a little girl. This little girl has dreams that not everybody understands. And the dreams sometimes go far away. Far far away.

Text by DAVID WOJNAROWICZ, Inside This House (1990)









“tension of words-things
image-things in space-time”

???????2??????????!!!

“the shelf becomes the glue=====that enables>the debris<of>the=past<to stick together, at least temporarily.”







THE LIVE CREATURE
by John Dewey, originally published
in the book Art As Experience (1934)

George Steiner's concept of art leaves no room for doubt. Art is transcendence and metaphysics. At its core, it is religious. It brings us "in sane touch" with that which "transcends."1 It is the "making formal of epiphany." With it, "there is a shining through."2 Every art possessing "compelling stature"— Steiner mentions Kafka explicitly—is a "referral" to "a transcendent dimension ... which is felt to reside either explicitly, this is to say ritually, theologically, by force of revelation—or implicitly, outside immanent and purely secular reach."3 A "mantic breath of strangeness" inhabits art.4 Inevitably an "otherness" adheres to it, an "aura of terror."5 Art allows us to sense that we are "neighbors to the unknown."

For Steiner too, art is passion. Passion alone grants access to transcendence: "Whether we would or not, these overwhelming, commonplace inexplicabilities and the imperative of questioning which is the core of man make us close neighbors to the transcendent. Poetry, art, music are the medium of that neighborhood."7 The artist is Homo doloris. The "apprehensions and figurations in the play of metaphysical imagining, in the poem and the music," tell, according to Steiner, "of pain and of hope, of the flesh which is said to taste of ash." The grief of ashes is the motive force of art. All artistic forms of expression are forms of passion. They "have risen out of an immensity of waiting."8 True art as passion remains mindful of death. Its "seriousness" is owed to being-toward- death. Heroic resistance to mortality distinguishes art as passion. Entertainment, in contrast, is immanence. It is not freighted with metaphysical potential. It is ephemeral and doomed.

Regarding the theologization of art, Theodor Adorno stands near to Steiner, though his own thinking displays far more nuance. Despite Adorno's inclination toward absolute passion, he recognizes a certain point of convergence of art and entertainment. To cite him once more: "Amusement, free of all restraint, would be not only the opposite of art but its complementary extreme." Where entertainment liberates itself toward passion, it bends toward art. Not only the theological elevation of art lacks serenity, but also, in equal measure, the theological liberation of entertainment. Pure sense and pure nonsense converge in hysteria.

Art history is not necessarily a passion narrative. Pain, fear, solitude— these are not the only motivations for the production of art forms. The presence of art need not consist in referral to transcendence. The art of immanence and the art of the ephemeral are not contradictions in terms. Both are animated by a wholly different relationship to death and finitude whose expression is neither the pale reflection of the lit corpse nor heroic resistance to death. Kafka's death- passion must give way to conscious innocence.

In a conversation, Robert Rauschenberg clarifies his relationship to death: "Barbara Rose: In all your imagery, there is no death. ... It's interesting that in all your years of producing new directions in your art, you have never gotten into death imagery. Is that something you ever think about? Robert Rauschenberg: Not often. I have always said that life has nothing to do with death. They're two separate things, and that's the way it ought to be. If that's innocent, so be it. Innocence is not like virginity. Virginity you can only have once. Innocence you have to nourish every day."

For Rauschenberg, art is not defined outside the world, "outside immanent and purely secular reach." His art is one of immanence. It does not withdraw from the world. A calm friendliness, an "affection" toward the world distinguishes his art: "The next thing is affection. Even though it's just an old piece of can, that doesn't stop me from falling in love with it."10 Rauschenberg's art of immanence inhabits, adorns, transfigures the quotidian, the ephemeral, the transitory. If his art is religious, then it is a religion of immanence or the quotidian. It discovers the spirituality of the everyday, of the inconspicuous, of the ephemeral. The artist rummages through the world, attends lovingly on everyday things, and tells their story: "I like the experience that says a shirt changes when it gets in the sun a little, or when you go swimming in it, or when the dog sleeps on it. I like the history of objects."11 Rauschenberg distances himself repeatedly from transcendent art and from its metaphysical-religious pathos. That passion for truth that characterizes Barnett Newman is foreign to him. According to Newman, the task of art consists of wresting "truth from the void." Art is life. Life means, as Kafka rightly says, renouncing "complacency." It is thus a matter of avoiding the reproduction of the ego: "I don't want my personality to come out through the piece. That's why I keep the television on all the time. And I keep the windows open."13 Rauschenberg leaves the window open so that no monadic inwardness may seal off his view of the world. The television de-internalizes the ego, deflects it toward the world. It dispassions the individual. It is in a sense an instrument of primordial distraction. We are deflected from ourselves and toward the world. Rauschenberg's use of the television is plainly a spiritual one. Art is expressly a deviation toward the world. Open windows counteract monadic absorption in worldless inwardness. Art is not necessarily the product of an undistracted life fixated on death. Rauschenberg comments, pace those artists who only paint nightmares, who only inhabit and adorn their own inwardness: "My attitude is that if I am in a working situation, I just look around and see what's around me. If I've picked up something, touched something or moved somewhere, then something starts happening."14 This is a deflection from the ego to things in one's surroundings. This deviation also extends to the body: "I want to free my body, my head and my thoughts from my ego."15 This is the freedom that Kafka fails to achieve: "I have not bought myself off by my writing. I died my whole life long and now I will really die."16 Even the fear of death that plagued Kafka is connected with a hypertrophy of the ego: "I need to be free from my fears also. In this way all the energy that physically creates can move freely. I think fears are the same as ego. Perhaps they're cousins."

Less ego means less world. And less fear means greater serenity. Rauschenberg's relaxed relationship to entertainment is based on serenity before the world. "I love television and I always keep it on. I don't like it when people are always changing the stations and interrupting the shows. I'd rather watch a lousy show all the way through."18 Rauschenberg is at pains to suggest here that entertainment also belongs to the world, that television too is a window onto the world, and that he leaves it running, just as he leaves the window open, to countenance entertainment without succumbing to it. His creed is to exclude nothing: "Barbara Rose: You really have a desire to try and see and include everything. Robert Rauschenberg: I think that's what everything is about. Barbara Rose: But there is a desire to not shut anything out. Everything has to be brought into it—inclusion and not exclusion."19 To be friendly also means "to include everything." The motto of Rauschenberg's art is: To offer a friendly reception to the world and its things. Art as passion, on the other hand, is highly selective or exclusive. No friendliness is proper to it. Rauschenberg's art of friendliness opens up another world, another everydayness that eschews both the art of passion and the art of entertainment. Neither passion nor entertainment is aware of friendly circumspection. Both are prisoners to blindness. They are unfamiliar with serene friendliness to the world. Rauschenberg's art of friendliness takes part in the world. It is one of the possible means of access to the world. Art does not in the least take precedence here. Television, as a window onto the world, is also a means of access, and Rauschenberg always leaves it open. TV shows, too, contain the world. Against Heidegger, Rauschenberg would object that television does not necessarily signify a poverty of world, that Heidegger's own world is characterized by a kind of poverty, that it excludes a great deal, that a certain foreignness to the world motivates Heidegger's thinking, that Heidegger is ignorant of serenity before the world. Even after fifteen years, his relationship to television has not fundamentally changed. Only death, which has crept closer, provokes unease in him: "There's a television in almost every room, and they are all on 24 hours a day ... I just need them. If they all gave out, that would be almost like death. I would be cut off from everything. Then all I would have left is art."



)they asked:<"less
>+less_fear=greater

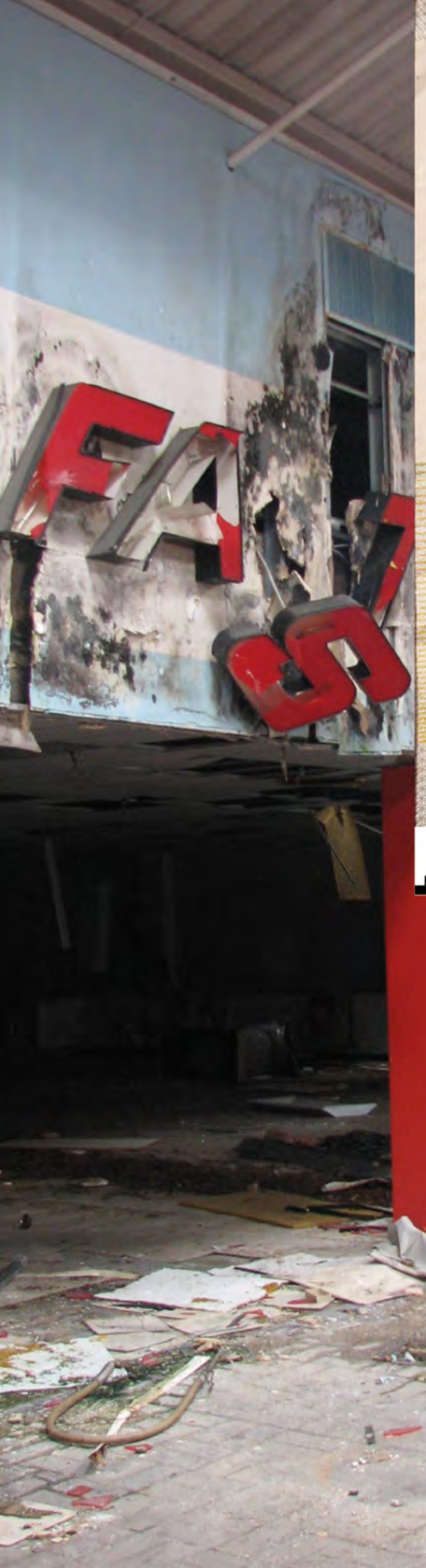
ego<>less world?
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“editing = the most obvious way of manipulating vision.”



“Editing is the most obvious way of manipulating vision. And yet, the camera sometimes sees what you don’t – a person in the background, for example, or an object moving in the wind. I like these accidents. My first full-length film, Esperanza, was about a woman I befriended on the Lower East Side when I was a film student at NYU. Esperanza had hoarded nearly all the portable objects she had touched every day for thirty years: the Chock Full O’Nuts paper coffee cups, copies of the Daily News, magazines, gum wrappers, price tags, receipts, rubber bands, plastic bags from the 99-cent store where she did most of her shopping, piles of clothes, torn towels, and bric-a-brac she had found in the street. Esperanza’s apartment consisted of floor-to-ceiling stacks of stuff. At first sight, the crowded apartment appeared to be pure chaos, but Esperanza explained to me that her piles were not random. Her paper cups had their own corner. These crenellated towers of yellowing, disintegrating waxed cardboard stood next to piles of newspapers … One evening, however, while I was watching the footage from a day’s filming, I found myself scrutinizing a pile of rags beside Esperanza’s mattress. I noticed that there were objects carefully tucked in among the fraying bits of coloured cloth: rows of pencils, stones, matchbooks, business cards. It was this sighting that led to the “explanation.” She was keenly aware that the world at large disapproved of her “lifestyle,” and that there was little room left for her in the apartment, but when I asked her about the objects among the rags, she said that she wanted to “keep them safe and sound.” The rags were beds for the things. “Both the beds and the ones that lay down on them,” she told me, “are nice and comfy.” It turned out that Esperanza felt for each and every thing she saved, as if the tags and town sweaters and dishes and postcards and newspapers and toys and rags were imbued with thoughts and feelings. After she saw the film, my mother said that Esperanza appeared to believe in a form of “panpsychism.” Mother said that this meant that mind is a fundamental feature of the universe and exists in everything, from stones to people. She said Spinoza subscribed to this view, and “it was a perfectly legitimate philosophical position.” Esperanza didn’t know anything about Spinoza … My mother believed and I believe in really looking hard at things because, after a while, what you see isn’t at all what you thought you were seeing just a short time before. looking at any person or object carefully means that it will become increasingly strange, and you will see more and more. I wanted my film about this lonely woman to break down visual and cultural cliches, to be an intimate portrait, not a piece of leering voyeurism about woman’s horrible accumulations.”

SIRI HUSTVEDT, in The Blazing World (2014)











THE LIVE CREATURE BY ONE of the ironic perversities that often attend the course of affairs,the existence of the works of art upon which forma tion of an esthetic theory depends has become an obstruction to theory about them. For one reason, these works are products that exist externally and physically. In common conception, the work of art is often identified with the building, book, painting, or statue in its existence apart from human experience. Since the actual work of art is whatthe product does with andin experience, the resultis not favorable to understanding. In addition, the very perfection of some of these products, the prestige they possess because of a long history of unquestioned admiration, creates conventions that get in the way of fresh insight. When an art product once attains classic status, it somehow becomes isolated from the human conditions under which it was brougt into being and from the human consequences it engenders in actual life-experience.

When artistic objects are separated from both conditions of origin and operation in experience, a wall is built around them that renders almost opaque their general significance, with which esthetic theory deals. Art is remitted to a separate realm, where it is cut off from that association with the materials and aims of every other form of human effort, undergoing, and achievement.

A primary task is thus imposed upon one who undertakes to write upon the philosophy of the fine arts. This task is to restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience.

Mountain peaks do not float unsupported; they do not even just rest upon the earth. They are the earth in one of its manifest operations. It is the business of those who are concerned with the theory of the earth, geographers and geologists, to make this fact evident in its various implications., The theorist who would deal philosophically with fine art has a like task to accomplish. If one is willing to grant this position, even if only by way of temporary experiment, he will see that there follows a conclusion at first sight surprising. In order to understand the meaning of artistic products, we have to forget them for a time, to turn aside from them and have recourse to the ordinary forces and conditions of experience that we do not usually regard as esthetic.

We must arrive at the theory of art by means of a detour. For theory is concerned with understanding, insight, not without exclamations of admiration, and stimulation of that emotional out burst often called appreciation. It is quite possible to enjoy flowers in their colored form and delicate fragrance without knowing any thing about plants theoretically. But if one sets out to understand the flowering of plants, he is committed to finding out something about the interactions of soil, air, water and sunlight that condition the growth of plants.

By common consent, the Parthenon is a great work of art. Yet it has esthetic standing only as the work becomes an experience for a human being. And, if one is to go beyond personal enjoyment into the formation of a theory about that large republic of art of which the building is one member, one has to be willing at some point in his reflections to turn from it to the bustling, arguing, acutely sensitive Athenian citizens, with civic sense identified with a civic religion, of whose experience the temple was an expression, and who built it not as a work of art but as a civic commemoration. The turning to them is as human beings who had needs that were a demand for the building and that were carried to fulfillment in it; it is not an examination such as might be carried on by a sociologist in search for material relevant to his purpose. The one who sets out to theorize about the esthetic experience embodied in the Parthenon must realize in thought what the people into whose lives it entered had in common, as creators and as those who were satisfied with it, with people in our own homes and on our own streets.

SERENITY BEFORE THE WORLD
by BYUNG-CHUL HAN, originally published in the book GOOD ENTERTAINMENT (2019)

In order to understand the esthetic in its ultimate and approved forms, one must begin with it in the raw; in the events and scenes that hold the attentive eye and ear of man, arousing his interest and affording him enjoyment as he looks and listens: the sights that hold the crowd—the fire-engine rushing by; the machines excavating enormous holes in the earth; the human-fly climbing the steeple-side; the men perched high in air on girders, throwing and catching red-hot bolts. The sources of art in human experience will be learned by him who sees how the tense grace of the ball-player infects the onlooking crowd; who notes the delight of the housewife in tending her plants, and the intent interest of her goodman in tending the patch of green in front of the house; the zest of the spectatorin poking the wood burning on the hearth and in watching the darting flames and crumbling coals. These people, if questioned as to the reason for their actions, would doubtless return reasonable answers. The man who poked the sticks of burning wood would say he did it to make the fire burn better; but he is none the less fascinated by the colorfuldrama of changeenactedbefore his eyes and imaginatively partakes in it. He does not remain a cold spectator. What Coleridge said of the reader of poetry is true in its way of all who are happily absorbed in their activities of mind and body: "The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, not by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution, but by the pleasurable activity of the journey itself."

The intelligent mechanic engaged in his job, interested in doing well and finding satisfaction in his handiwork, caring for his materials and tools with genuine affection, is artistically engaged. The difference between such a worker and the inept and carelessbungler is as great in the shop as it is in the studio. Often times the product may not appeal to the esthetic sense of those who use the product. The fault, however, is oftentimes not so much with the worker as with the conditions of the market for which his product is designed. Were conditions and opportunities different, things as significant to the eye as those produced by earlier craftsmen would be made.

“junkspace”

Words by REM KOOLHAS, originally published in October, Vol. 100, Obsolescence. (Spring, 2002), pp. 175–190.

Rabbit is the new beef... Because we abhor the utilitarian, we have condemned ourselves to a lifelong immersion in the arbitrary... LAX: welcoming possibly flesh-eating-orchids at the check-in counter “Identity” is the new junk food for the dispossessed, globalization’s fodder for the disenfranchised... If space-junk is the human debris that litters the universe, Junk-Space is the residue mankind leaves on the planet. The built (more about that later) product of modernization is not modern architecture but Junkspace. Junkspace is what remains after modernization has run its course, or, more precisely, what coagulates while modernization is in progress, its fallout. Modernization had a rational program: to share the blessings of science, universally. Junkspace is its apotheosis, or meltdown Although its individual parts are the outcome of brilliant inventions, lucidly planned by human intelligence, boosted by infinite computation, their sum spells the end of Enlightenment, its resurrection as farce, a low-grade purgatory... Junkspace is the sum total of our current achievement; we have built more than did all previous generations put together, but somehow we do not register on the same scales. We do not leave pyramids. According to a new gospel of ugliness, there is already more Junkspace under construction in the twenty-first century than has survived from the twentieth... It was a mistake to invent modern architecture for the twentieth century. Architecture disappeared in the twentieth century; we have been reading a footnote under a microscope hoping it would turn into a novel; our concern for the masses has blinded us to People’s Architecture. Junkspace seems an aberration, but it is the essence, the main thing, the product of an encounter between escalator and air-conditioning, conceived in an incubator of Sheetrock (all three missing from the history books). Continuity is the essence of Junkspace; it exploits any invention that enables expansion, deploys the infrastructure of seamlessness: escalator, air-conditioning, sprinkler, fire shutter, hot-air curtain... It is always interior, so extensive that you rarely perceive limits; it promotes disorientation by any means (mirror, polish, echo... Junkspace is sealed, held together not by structure but by skin, like a bubble. Gravity has remained constant, resisted by the same arsenal since the beginning of time; but air-conditioning-invisible medium, therefore unnoticed-has truly revolutionized architecture. Air-conditioning has launched the endless building. If architecture separates buildings, air-conditioning unites them. Air-conditioning has dictated mutant regimes of organization and coexistence that leave architecture behind. A single shopping center is now the work of generations of space planners, repair- men, and fixers, like in the Middle Ages; air-conditioning sustains our cathedrals. (All architects may unwittingly be working on the same building, so far separate, but with hidden receptors that will eventually make it cohere.) Because it costs money, is no longer free, conditioned space inevitably becomes conditional space; sooner or later all conditional space turns into Junkspace. When we think about space, we have only looked at its containers. As if space itself is invisible, all theory for the production of space is based on an obsessive preoccupation with its oppo- site: substance and objects, i.e., architecture. Architects could never explain space; Junkspace is our punishment for their mystifications. O.K., let’s talk about space then. The beauty of airports, especially after each upgrade. The luster of renovations. The subtlety of the shopping center. Let’s explore public space, dis- cover casinos, spend time in theme parks. Junkspace is the body double of space, a territory of impaired vision, limited expectation, reduced earnestness. Junkspace is a Bermuda Triangle of concepts, an abandoned petri dish: it cancels distinctions, undermines resolve, confuses intention with realization. It replaces hierarchy with accumulation, composition with addition. More and more, more is more. Junkspace is overripe and undernourishing at the same time, a colossal security blanket that covers the earth in a stranglehold of seduction... Junkspace is like being condemned to a perpetual Jacuzzi with millions of your best friends.

A fuzzy empire of blur, it fuses high and low, public and private, straight and bent, bloated and starved to offer a seamless patchwork of the permanently disjointed. Seemingly an apotheosis, spatially grandiose, the effect of its richness is a terminal hollowness, a vicious parody of ambition that systematically erodes the credibility of building, possibly forever... Space was created by piling matter on top of mat- ter, cemented to form a solid new whole. Junkspace is additive, layered, and lightweight, not articulated in different parts but subdivided, quartered the way a carcass is torn apart-individual chunks severed from a universal condition. There are no walls, only partitions, shimmering membranes frequently covered in mirror or gold. Structure groans invisibly underneath decoration, or worse, has become ornamental; small, shiny, space frames support nominal loads, or huge beams deliver cyclopic burdens to unsuspecting destinations The arch, once the workhorse of structures, has become the depleted emblem of “community,” wel- coming an infinity of virtual populations to nonexistent theres. Where it is absent, it is simply applied-mostly in stucco-as ornamental afterthought on hurriedly erected superblocks. Junkspace’s iconography is 13 percent Roman, 8 percent Bauhaus and 7 percent Disney (neck and neck), 3 percent Art Nouveau, followed closely by Mayan Like a substance that could have condensed in any other form, Junkspace is a domain of feigned, simulated order, a kingdom of morph- ing. Its specific configuration is as fortuitous as the geometry of a snowflake. Patterns imply repetition or ultimately decipherable rules; Junkspace is beyond measure, beyond code Because it cannot be grasped, Junkspace cannot be remembered. It is flamboyant yet unmemorable, like a screen saver; its refusal to freeze ensures instant amnesia. Junkspace does not pretend to create perfection, only interest. Its geometries are unimaginable, only makable. Although strictly nonarchitectural, it tends to the vaulted, to the Dome. Some sections seem to be devoted to utter inertness, others in perpetual rhetorical turmoil; the deadest resides next to the most hysterical. Themes cast a pall of arrested development over interiors as big as the Pantheon, spawning stillbirths in every corner. The aesthetic is Byzantine, gorgeous, and dark, splintered into thousands of shards, all visible at the same time: a quasi-panoptical universe in which all contents rearrange themselves in split seconds around the dizzy eye of the beholder. Murals used to show idols; Junkspace’s modules are dimensioned to carry brands; myths can be shared, brands husband aura at the mercy of focus groups. Brands in Junkspace perform the same role as black holes in the universe: they are essences through which meaning disappears... The shiniest surfaces in the history of mankind reflect humanity at its most casual. The more we inhabit the palatial, the more we seem to dress down. A stringent dress code-last spasm of etiquette?- governs access to Junkspace: shorts, sneakers, sandals, shell suit, fleece, jeans, parka, backpack. As if the People suddenly accessed the private quarters of a dictator. Junkspace is best enjoyed in a state of postrevolutionary gawking. Polarities have merged there is nothing left between desolation and frenzy. Neon signifies both the old and the new; interiors refer to the Stone and Space Age at the same time. Like the deactivated virus in an inoculation, Modern archi- tecture remains essential, but only in its most sterile manifestation. High Tech (it seemed so dead only a decade ago!). It exposes what previous generations kept under wraps: structures emerge like springs from a mattress; exit stairs dangle in a didactic trapeze; probes thrust into space to deliver laboriously what is in fact omnipresent, free air; acres of glass hang from spidery cables, tautly stretched skins enclose flaccid nonevents. Transparency only reveals everything in which you cannot partake. At the stroke of midnight it all may revert to Taiwanese Gothic; in three years it may segue into Nigerian Sixties, Norwegian Chalet, or default Christian. Earthlings now live in a kindergarten grotesque... Junkspace thrives on design, but design dies in Junkspace. There is no form, only proliferation Regurgitation is the new creativity; instead of creation, we honor, cherish, and embrace manipulation Superstrings of graphics, transplanted emblems of franchise and sparkling infrastructures of light, LEDs, and video describe an authorless world beyond anyone’s claim, always unique, utterly unpredictable, yet intensely familiar. Junkspace is hot (or suddenly arctic); fluorescent walls, folded like melting stained glass, generate additional heat to raise the temperature of Junkspace to levels at which you could cultivate orchids. Pretending histories left and right, its contents are dynamic yet stagnant, recycled or multiplied as in cloning: forms search for function like hermit crabs looking for a vacant shell... Junkspace sheds architectures like a reptile sheds skins, is reborn every Monday morning. In previous building, materiality was based on a final state that could only be modified at the expense of partial destruction. At the exact moment that our culture has abandoned repetition and regularity as repressive, building materials



“junkfair”

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have become more and more modular, unitary, and standardized; substance now comes predigitized As the module becomes smaller and smaller, its status become that of a crypto-pixel. With enormous difficulty-budget, argument, negotiation, deformation-irregularity and uniqueness are constructed from identical elements. Instead of trying to wrest order from chaos, the picturesque is now wrested from the homogenized, the singular liberated from the standardized. Architects thought of Junkspace first and named it Megastructure, the final solu- tion to transcend their huge impasse. Like multiple Babels, huge superstructures would last through eternity, teeming with impermanent subsystems that would mutate over time, beyond their control. In Junkspace, the tables are turned: it is subsystem only, without superstructure, orphaned particles in search of a frame- work or pattern. All materialization is provisional: cutting, bending, tearing, coating: construction has acquired a new softness, like tailoring... The joint is no longer a problem, an intellectual issue: transitional moments are defined by stapling and taping, wrinkly brown bands barely maintain the illusion of an unbroken surface; verbs unknown and unthinkable in architectural history- clamp, stick, fold, dump, glue, shoot, double, fuse have become indispensable. Each element performs its task in negotiated isolation. Where as detailing once suggested the coming together, possibly forever, of disparate materials, it is now a transient coupling, waiting to be undone, unscrewed, a temporary embrace with a high probability of separation; no longer the orchestrated encounter of difference, but the abrupt end of a system, a stalemate. Only the blind, reading its fault lines with their fingertips, will ever understand Junkspace's histories While whole millennia worked in favor of permanence, axialities, relationships, and proportion, the program of Junkspace is escalation. Instead of development, it offers entropy. Because it is endless, it always leaks somewhere in Junkspace; in the worst case, monumental ashtrays catch intermittent drops in a gray broth... When did time stop moving forward, begin to spool in every direction, like a tape spinning out of control? Since the introduction of Real TimeTM? Change has been divorced from the idea of improvement. There is no progress; like a crab on LSD, culture staggers endlessly sideways The average contemporary lunch box is a micro- cosm of Junkspace: a fervent semantics of health-slabs of eggplant, topped by thick layers of goat cheese-canceled by a colossal cookie at the bottom Junkspace is draining and is drained in return. Everywhere in Junkspace there are seating arrangements, ranges of modular chairs, even couches, as if the experience Junkspace offers its consumers is significantly more exhausting than any previousspatial sensation; in its most abandoned stretches, you find buffets: utilitarian tables draped in white or black sheets, perfunctory assemblies of caffeine and calories-cottage cheese, muffins, unripe grapes-notional representations of plenty, without horn and without plenty. Each Junkspace is connected, sooner or later, to bodily functions: wedged between stainless-steel partitions sit rows of groaning Romans, denim togas bunched around their huge sneakers... Because it is so intensely consumed, Junkspace is fanatically maintained, the night shift undoing the damage of the day shift in an endless Sisyphean replay. As you recover from Junkspace, Junkspace recovers from you: between 2 and 5 A.M., yet another population, this one heartlessly casual and appreciably darker, is mopping, hovering, sweeping, toweling, resupplying... Junkspace does not inspire loyalty in its cleaners... Dedicated to instant gratification, Junkspace accommodates seeds of future perfection; a language of apology is woven through its texture of canned euphoria; "pardon our appearance" signs or miniature yellow "sorry" billboards mark ongoing patches of wetness, announce momentary discomfort in return for imminent shine, the allure of improvement. Somewhere, workers sink on their knees to repair faded sections, as if in a prayer, or half-disappear in ceiling voids to negotiate elusive malfunctions, as if in confession. All surfaces are archaeological, superpositions of different "periods" (what do you call the moment a particular type of wall-to-wall carpet was current?)-as you note when they're torn Traditionally, typology implies demarcation, the definition of a singular model that excludes other arrangements. Junkspace represents a reverse typology of cumulative, approximative identity, less about kind than about quantity. But formlessness is still form, the formless also a typology Take the dump, where successive trucks discharge their loads to form a heap, whole in spite of the randomness of its contents and its fundamental shapelessness, or that of the tent- envelope that assumes different shapes to accommodate variable interior volumes. Or the vague crotches of the new generation. Junkspace can either be absolutely chaotic or frighteningly aseptic-like a best-seller-overdetermined and indeterminate at the same time. There is something strange about ballrooms, for instance: huge wastelands kept column-free for ultimate flexibility. Because you've never been invited to that kind of event, you have never seen them in use; you've only seen them being prepared with chilling precision: a relentless grid of circular tables, extending toward a distant horizon, their diameters preempting communication; a dais big enough for the politburo of a totalitarian state, wings announcing as yet unimagined surprises-acres of organization to support future drunkenness, disarray, and disorder. Or car shows... Junkspace is often described as a space of flows, but that is a misnomer; flows depend on disciplined movement, bodies that cohere. Junkspace is a web without a spider; although it is an architecture of the masses, each trajectory is strictly unique. Its anarchy is one of the last tangible ways in which we experience freedom. It is a space of collision, a container of atoms, busy, not dense There is a special way of moving in Junkspace, at the same time aimless and purposeful. It is an acquired culture. >>>>

"Stanley Brouwn is standing *somewhere* on earth. He asks a random pedestrian to show on paper the way to another point in the city. The next pedestrian shows him the way. The 24th, the 11,000th pedestrian shows him the way. This Way Brouwn. A This Way Brouwn is produced in the time it takes the pedestrian to give his explanation. No second thoughts, no polishing and touching up the result. The fleet of streets, squares, lanes, etc., is sinking deeper and deeper in a network of This Way Brouwns. All direction is being drained from it. They are leading nowhere. They are already involved, captured in my work. I am concentrating the direction of all possible ways in my work. I am the only way, the only direction. I have become direction."

"making worlds"=not limited-to>humans<

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Junkspace features the tyranny of the oblivious: sometimes an entire Junkspace comes unstuck through the nonconformity of one of its members; a single citizen of an another culture–a refugee, a mother–can destabilize an entire Junkspace, hold it to a rustic's ransom, leaving an invisible swath of obstruction in his/her wake, a deregulation eventually communicated to its furthest extremities. Where movement becomes synchronized, it curdles: on escalators, near exits, parking machines, automated tellers. Sometimes, under duress, individuals are channeled in a flow, pushed through a single door or forced to negotiate the gap between two temporary obstacles (an invalid's bleeping chariot and a Christmas tree): the manifest ill will such narrowing provokes mocks the notion of flows. Flows in Junkspace lead to disaster: department stores at the beginning of sales; the stampedes triggered by warring compartments of soccer fans; dead bodies piling up in front of the locked emergency doors of a disco–evidence of the awkward fit between the portals of Junkspace and the narrow calibrations of the old world. The young instinctively avoid the Dante-esque manipulations/containers to which Junkspace has condemned their elders in perpetuity. Within the meta-playground of Junkspace exist smaller playgrounds, Junkspace for children (usually in the least desirable square footage): sections of sudden miniaturization–often underneath staircases, always near dead ends and assemblies of underdimensioned plastic structures–slides, seesaws, swings–shunned by their intended audience are turned into a Junkniche for the old, the lost, the forgotten, the insane the last hiccup of humanism Traffic is Junkspace, from airspace to the subway; the entire highway system is Junkspace, a vast potential utopia clogged by its users, as you notice when they've finally disappeared on vacation... Like radioactive waste, Junkspace has an insidious half-life. Aging in Junkspace is nonexistent or cata- strophic; sometimes an entire Junkspace–a department store, a nightclub, a bachelor pad–turns into a slum overnight without warning: wattage diminishes imperceptibly, letters drop out of signs, air-conditioning units start dripping, cracks appear as if from otherwise unregistered earthquakes; sections rot, are no longer viable, but remain joined to the flesh of the main body via gangrenous passages. Judging the built presumed a static condition; now each architecture embodies opposite conditions simultaneously: old and new, permanent and tempo- rary, flourishing and at risk... Sections undergo an Alzheimer's-like deterioration as others are upgraded. Because Junkspace is endless, it is never closed... Renovation and restoration were procedures that took place in your absence; now you're a witness, a reluctant participant Seeing Junkspace in conversion is like inspecting an unmade bed, someone else's. Say an airport needs more space. In the past, new terminals were added, each more or less characteristic of its own age, leaving the old ones as a readable record, evidence of progress. Since passengers have definitively demonstrated their infinite malleability, the idea of rebuilding on the spot has gained currency. Travelators are thrown into reverse, signs taped, potted palms (or very large corpses) covered in body bags. Screens of taped Sheetrock segregate two populations: one wet, one dry, one hard, one flabby, one cold, one overheated. Half the population produces new space; the more affluent half consumes old space. To accommodate a nether world of manual labor, the concourse suddenly turns into Casbah: improvised locker rooms, coffee breaks, smoking, even real campfires The ceiling is a crumpled plate like the Alps; grids of unstable tiles alternate with monogrammed sheets of black plastic, improbably punctured by grids of crystal chandeliers

Metal ducts are replaced by breathing textiles. Gaping joints reveal vast ceiling voids (former canyons of asbestos?), beams, ducting, rope, cable, insulation, fire- proofing, string; tangled arrangements suddenly exposed to daylight. Impure, tortured, and complex, they exist only because they were never consciously plotted. The floor is a patchwork: different textures concrete, hairy, heavy, shiny, plastic, metallic, muddy–alternate randomly, as if dedicated to different species The ground is no more. There are too many raw needs to be realized on only one plane. The absolute horizontal has been abandoned. Transparency has disappeared, to be replaced by a dense crust of provisional occupation: kiosks, carts, strollers, palms, fountains, bars, sofas, trolleys... Corridors no longer simply link A to B, but have become "destinations." Their tenant life tends to be short: the most stagnant windows, the most perfunctory dresses, the most implausible flowers. All perspective is gone, as in a rainforest (itself disappearing, they keep saying...). The formerly straight is coiled into evermore complex configurations. Only a perverse modernist choreography can explain the twists and turns, the ascents and descents, the sudden reversals that comprise the typical path from check-in (misleading name) to the apron of the average contemporary airport. Because we never reconstruct or question the absurdity of these enforced dérives, we meekly submit to grotesque journeys past perfume, asylum-seekers, building site, underwear, oysters, pornography, cell phone–incredible adventures for the brain, the eye, the nose, the tongue, the womb, the testicles... There was once a polemic about the right angle and the straight line; now the ninetieth degree has become one among many. In fact, remnants of former geometries create ever new havoc, offering forlorn nodes of resistance that create unstable eddies in newly opportunistic flows... Who would dare claim responsibility for this sequence? The idea that a profession once dictated, or at least presumed to predict, people's movements now seems laughable, or worse: unthinkable. Instead of design, there is calculation: the more erratic the path, eccentric the loops, hidden the blueprint, efficient the exposure, the more inevitable the transaction. In this war, graphic designers are the great turncoats: Where once signage promised to deliver you to where you wanted to be, it now obfuscates and entangles you in a thicket of cuteness that forces you past unwanted detours, turns you back when you're lost. Postmodernism adds a crumple-zone of viral poché that fractures and multiplies the endless frontline of display, a peristaltic shrink-wrap crucial to all commercial exchange. Trajectories are launched as ramp, turn horizontal without any warning, intersect, fold down, suddenly emerge on a vertiginous balcony above a large void. Fascism minus dictator. From the sudden dead end where you were dropped by a monumental, granite staircase, an escalator takes you to an invisible destination, facing a provisional vista made of plaster, inspired by forgettable sources. (There is no datum level; you always inhabit a sandwich. "Space" is scooped out of Junkspace as from a soggy block of ice cream that has languished too long in the freezer: cylindrical, cone-shaped, more or less spherical, whatever...) Toilet groups mutate into Disney Stores then morph to become meditation centers: Successive transformations mock the word "plan." The plan is a radar screen where individual pulses survive for unpredictable periods of time in a Bacchanalian free-for-all... In this standoff between the redundant and the inevitable, a plan would actually make matters worse, would drive you to instant despair. Only the diagram gives a bearable version. There is zero loyalty and zero tolerance-toward configuration, no "original" condition; architecture has turned into a time-lapse sequence to reveal a "permanent evolution."... The only certainty is conversion-continuous followed, in rare cases, by "restoration," the process that claims ever new sections of history as extensions of Junkspace. History corrupts, absolute history corrupts absolutely. Color and matter are eliminated from these bloodless grafts: the bland has become the only meeting ground for the old and the new Can the bland be amplified? The featureless be exaggerated? Through height? Depth? Length? Variation? Repetition? Sometimes not overload but its opposite, an absolute absence of detail, generates Junkspace. A voided condition of frightening sparseness, shocking proof that so much can be organized by so little. Laughable emptiness infuses the respectful distance or tentative embrace that starchitects maintain in the presence of the past, authentic or not. Invariably, the primordial decision is to leave the original intact; the formerly residual is declared the new essence, the focus of the intervention. As a first step, the substance to be preserved is wrapped in a thick pack of commerce and catering-like a reluctant skier pushed downhill by responsible minders. To show respect, symmetries are maintained and helplessly exaggerated; ancient building techniques are resurrected and honed to irrelevant shine, quarries reopened to excavate the "same" stone, indiscreet donor names chiseled prominently in the meekest of typefaces; the courtyard covered by a masterful, structural "filigree"-emphatically uncompetitive-so that continuity may be established with the "rest" of Junkspace (abandoned galleries, display slums, Jurassic concepts.). Conditioning is applied; filtered daylight reveals vast, antiseptic expanses of monumental reticence and makes them come alive, vibrant as a computer rendering... The curse of public space: latent fascism safely smothered in signage, stools, sympathy Junkspace is postexistential; it makes you uncertain where you are, obscures where you go, undoes where you were. Who do you think you are? Wh



{anticipating}

{instability}

<all>-that-goes-unnoticed:

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condescending contempt or enjoy it vicariously because you could not understand it, you've thrown away the keys... But now your own architecture is infected, has become equally smooth, all-inclusive, continuous, warped, busy, atrium-ridden...) JunkSignature T™ is the new architecture: the former megalomania of a profession contracted to manageable size, Junkspace minus its saving vulgarity. Anything stretched-limousines, body parts, planes-turns into Junkspace, its original concept abused. Restore, rearrange, reassemble, revamp, renovate, revise, recover, redesign, return-the Parthenon marbles-redo, respect, rent: verbs that start with re-produce Junkspace Junkspace will be our tomb. Half of mankind pollutes to produce, the other pollutes to consume. The combined pollution of all Third World cars, motorbikes, trucks, buses, sweatshops pales into insignificance compared to the heat generated by Junkspace. Junkspace is political: It depends on the central removal of the crit- ical faculty in the name of comfort and pleasure. Politics has become manifesto by Photoshop, seamless blueprints of the mutually exclusive, arbitrated by opaque NGOs. Comfort is the new Justice. Entire miniature states now adopt Junkspace as political program, establish regimes of engineered disorientation, instigate a politics of systematic disarray. Not exactly "anything goes"; in fact, the secret of Junkspace is that it is both promiscuous and repressive: as the formless proliferates, the formal withers, and with it all rules, regulations, recourse Babel has been misunderstood. Language is not the problem, just the new frontier of Junkspace. Mankind, torn by eternal dilemmas, the impasse of seemingly endless debates, has launched a new language that straddles unbridgeable divides like a fragile designer's footbridge... coined a proactive wave of new oxymorons to suspend former incompatibility: life/style, reality/TV, world/music, museum/store, food/court, health/care, waiting/lounge. Naming has replaced class struggle, sonorous amalgamations of status, high-concept, and history. Through acronym, unusual importation, suppressing letters, or fabrication of nonexistent plurals, they aim to shed meaning in return for a spacious new roominess... Junkspace knows all your emotions, all your desires. It is the interior of Big Brother's belly. It preempts people's sensations. It comes with a sound track, smell, captions; it blatantly proclaims how it wants to be read: rich, stunning, cool, huge, abstract, "minimal," historical. It sponsors a collective of brooding consumers in surly anticipation of their next spend, a mass of refractory periods caught in a Thousand Year Reign of Razzmatazz, a paroxysm of prosperity. The subject is stripped of privacy in return for access to a credit nirvana. You are complicit in the tracing of the fingerprints each of your transactions leaves; they know every- thing about you, except who you are. Emissaries of Junkspace pursue you in the formerly impervious privacy of the bedroom: the minibar, private fax machines, pay-TV offering compromised pornography, fresh plastic veils wrapping toilets seats, courtesy condoms: miniature profit centers coexist with your bedside bible. Junkspace pretends to unite, but it actually splinters. It creates communities not out of shared interest or free association, but out of identical statistics and unavoidable demographics, an opportunistic weave of vested interests. Each man, woman, and child is individually targeted, tracked, split off from the rest... Fragments come together at "security" only, where a grid of video screens disappointingly reassembles individual frames into a banalized, utilitarian cubism that reveals Junkspace's overall coherence to the dispassionate glare of barely trained guards: video-ethnography in its brute form. Just as Junkspace is unstable, its actual ownership is forever being passed on in parallel disloyalty. Junkspace happens spontaneously through natural corporate exuberance-the unfettered play of the market-or is generated through the combined actions of temporary "czars" with long records of three-dimensional philanthropy, bureaucrats (often former leftists) that optimistically sell off vast tracts of waterfront, former hippodromes, military bases and abandoned airfields to developers or real-estate moguls who can accommodate any deficit in futuristic balances, or through Default Preservation™™ (the maintenance of historical complexes that nobody wants but that the Zeitgeist has declared sacrosanct). As its scale mushrooms- rivals and even exceeds that of the Public-its economy becomes more inscrutable. Its financing is a deliberate haze, clouding opaque deals, dubious tax breaks, unusual incentives, exemptions, tenuous legalities, transferred air rights, joined properties, special zoning districts, public-private complicities. Funded by bonds, lottery, subsidy, charity, grant: An erratic flow of yen, Euros, and dollars (*) creates financial envelopes that are as fragile as their contents. Because of a structural shortfall, a fundamental deficit, a contingent bankruptcy, each square inch becomes a grasping, needy surface dependent on covert or overt support, discount, compensation and fund-raising. For culture, "engraved donor bricks"; for everything else: cash, rentals, leases, franchises, the underpinning of brands. Junkspace expands with the economy but its footprint cannot contract-when it is no longer needed, it thins. Because of its tenuous viability, Junkspace has to swallow more and more program to survive; soon, we will be able to do anything anywhere. We will have conquered place. At the end of Junkspace, the Universal? Through Junkspace, old aura is transfused with new luster to spawn sudden commercial viability: Barcelona amalgamated with the Olympics, Bilbao with the Guggenheim, Forty--second Street with Disney. God is dead, the author is dead, history is dead, only the architect is left standing... an insulting evolutionary joke... A shortage of masters has not stopped a proliferation of masterpieces. "Masterpiece" has become a definitive sanction, a semantic space that saves the object from criticism, leaves its qualities unproven, its performance untested, its motives unquestioned. Masterpiece is no longer an inexplicable fluke, a roll of the dice, but a consistent typology: its mission to intimidate, most of its exterior surfaces bent, huge percentages of its square footage dysfunctional, its centrifugal components barely held together by the pull of the atrium, dreading the imminent

Landscape has become “junkspace” as spoilage

The Apocalypse is rewriting +

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arrival of forensic accounting The more indeterminate the city, the more specific its Junkspace; all of Junkspace’s prototypes are urban–the Roman Forum, the Metropolis; it is only their reverse synergy that makes them suburban, simultaneously swollen and shrunk. Junkspace reduces what is urban to urbanity Instead of public life, Public SpaceTM: what remains of the city once the unpre- dictable has been removed... Space for “honoring,” “sharing,” “caring,” “grieving,” and “healing”... civility imposed by an overdose of serif... In the third Millennium, Junkspace will assume responsibility for pleasure and religion, exposure and intimacy, public life and privacy. Inevitably, the death of God (and the author) has spawned orphaned space; Junkspace is authorless, yet surprisingly authoritarian... At the moment of its greatest emancipation, humankind is sub- jected to the most dictatorial scripts: from the pushy oration of the waiter to the answering gulags on the other end of the telephone, the safety instructions on the airplane, more and more insistent perfumes, mankind is browbeaten into submitting to the most harshly engineered plotline. The chosen theater of megalomania–the dictatorial–is no longer politics, but entertainment. Through Junkspace, entertainment organizes hermetic regimes of ultimate exclusion and concentration: concentration gambling, concentration golf, concentration convention, concentration movie, concentration culture, concentration holiday. Entertainment is like watching a once-hot planet cool off; its major inventions are ancient: the moving image, the roller coaster, recorded sound, cartoons, clowns, dinosaurs, news, war. Except for celebrities of which there is a dramatic shortage–we have added nothing, just reconfigured. Corpotainment is a galaxy in contraction, forced to go through the motions by ruthless Copernican laws. The secret of corporate aesthetics was the power of elimination, the celebration of the efficient, the eradication of excess: abstraction as camouflage, the search for a Corporate Sublime. On popular demand, organized beauty has become warm, humanist, inclusivist, arbitrary, poetic, and unthreatening: water is pressurized through very small holes, then forced into rigorous hoops; straight palms are bent into grotesque poses, air is burdened with added oxygen–as if only forcing malleable substances into the most drastic contortions maintains control, satisfies the drive to get rid of surprise. Not canned laughter, but canned euphoria Color has disappeared to dampen the resulting cacophony, and is used only as cue: relax, enjoy, be well, we’re united in sedation Why can’t we tolerate stronger sensations? Dissonance? Awkwardness? Genius? Anarchy?... Junkspace heals, or at least that is the assumption of many hospitals. We thought the hospital was unique–a universe that identified by its smell–but now that we are used to universal conditioning we recognize it was merely a prototype; all Junkspace is defined by its smell. Often heroic in size, planned with the last adrenaline of modernism’s grand inspiration, we have made them (too) human; life or death decisions are taken in spaces that are relentlessly friendly, littered with fading bouquets, empty coffee cups, and yesterday’s papers. You used to face death in appropriate cells; now your nearest are huddled together in atriums. A bold datum line is established on every vertical surface, dividing the infirmary in two: above an endless humanist scroll of “color,” loved ones, children’s sunsets, signage, and art... below a utilitarian zone for defacement and disinfectant, anticipated collision, scratch, spill, and smudge... Junkspace is space as vacation; there once was a relationship between leisure and work, a biblical dictate that divided our weeks, organized public life. Now we work harder, marooned in a never-ending casual Friday... The office is the next frontier of Junkspace. Since you can work at home, the office aspires to the domestic; because you still need a life, it simulates the city. Junkspace features the office as the urban home, a meeting-boudoir: desks become sculptures, the work-floor is lit by intimate downlights. Monumental partitions, kiosks, mini-Starbucks on interior plazas: a Post-it universe: “team memory,” “information persistence”; futile hedges against the universal forgetting of the unmemorable, the oxymoron as mission statement. Witness corporate agit- prop: the CEO’s suite becomes “leadership collective,” wired to all the world’s other Junkspace, real or imagined. Espace becomes E-space. The twenty-first century will bring “intelligent” Junkspace: on a big digital “dashboard”: sales, CNNNYSENASDAQC-SPAN, anything that goes up or down, from good to bad, presented in real time like the automotive-theory course that complements driving lessons Globalization turns language into Junkspace. We are stuck in a speech-doldrums. The ubiquity of English is Pyrrhic: now that we all speak it, nobody remembers its use. The collective bastardization of English is our most impressive achievement; we have broken its back with ignorance, accent, slang, jargon, tourism, outsourcing, and multitasking... we can make it say anything we want, like a speech dummy.... Through the retrofitting of language, there are too few plausible words left; our most creative hypotheses will never be formulated, discoveries will remain unmade, concepts unlaunched, philosophies muffled, nuances miscarried... We inhabit sumptuous Potemkin suburbs of weasel termi- nologies. Aberrant linguistic ecologies sustain virtual subjects in their claim to legitimacy, help them survive... Language is no longer used to explore, define, express, or to confront but to fudge, blur, obfuscate, apologize, and comfort... it stakes claims, assigns victimhood, preempts debate, admits guilt, fosters consensus. Entire organizations and/or professions impose a descent into the linguistic equivalent of hell: condemned to a word-limbo, inmates wrestle with words in ever-descending spirals of pleading, lying, bargaining, flattening... a Satanic orchestration of the meaningless... Intended for the interior, Junkspace can easily engulf a whole city. First, it escapes from its containers–semantic orchids that needed hothouse protection emerging with surprising robustness–then the outdoors itself is converted: the street is paved more luxuriously, shelters proliferate carrying increasingly dictatorial messages, traffic is calmed, crime eliminated. Then Junkspace spreads like a forest fire in L.A. The global progress of Junkspace represents a final Manifest Destiny: the World as public space... All of the resurrected emblems and recycled ambers of the formerly public need new pastures. A new vegetal is corralled for its thematic efficiency. The outing of Junkspace has triggered the professionalization of denaturing, a benign eco- fascism that positions a rare surviving Siberian tiger in a forest of slot machines, near Armani, amid a twisted arboreal Baroque Outside, between the casinos, fountains project entire Stalinist buildings of liquid, ejaculated in a split second, hovering momentarily, then withdrawing with an amnesiac competency... Air, water, wood: All are enhanced to produce Hyperecology™, a parallel Walden, a new rainforest. Landscape has become Junkspace, foliage as spoilage: Trees are tortured, lawns cover human manipulations like thick pelts, or even toupees, sprinklers water according to mathematical timetables... Seemingly at the opposite end of Junkspace, the golf course is, in fact, its conceptual double: empty, serene, free of commercial debris. The relative evacuation of the golf course is achieved by the further charging of Junkspace. The methods of their design and realization are similar: erasure, tabula rasa, reconfiguration. Junkspace turns into biojunk; ecology turns into ecospace. Ecology and economy have bonded in Junkspace as ecolomy. The economy has become Faustian; hyperdevelopment depends on artificial underdevelopment; a huge global bureaucracy is in the making to settle, in a colossal yin/yang, the balance between Junkspace and golf, between the scraped and the ‘scaped, trading the right to despoil for the obligation to create steroid rainforests in Costa Rica. Oxygen banks, Fort Knoxes of chlorophyll, eco-reserves as a blank check for further pollution. Junkspace is rewriting the apocalypse; we may die of oxygen poisoning. In the past, the complexities of Junkspace were compensated for by the stark rawness of its adjunct infrastructures: parking garages, filling stations, distribution centers routinely displaying a monumental purity that was the original aim of modernism. Now, massive injections of lyricism have enabled an infrastructure the one domain previously immune to design, taste, or the marketplace–to join the world of Junkspace, and for Junkspace to extend its manifestations under the sky. Railway stations unfold like iron butterflies, airports glisten like cyclopic dew- drops, bridges span often negligible banks like grotesquely enlarged versions of the harp. To each rivulet its own Calatrava. (Sometimes when there is a strong wind, this new generation of instruments shakes as if being played by a giant, or maybe a God, and mankind shudders...) Junkspace can be airborne, bring malaria to Sussex; 300 anopheline mosquitoes arrive each day at GDG and GTW with ability, theoretically, to infect eight to twenty locals in a three-mile radius, a hazard exacerbated by the average

passenger's reluctance, in a misplaced gasp of quasi-autonomy, to be disinfected once he or she has buckled up for the return journey from the dead end of the tourist destination. Airports, provisional accommodation for those going elsewhere, inhabited by assemblies united only by the imminence of their dissolution, have turned into consumption gulags, democratically distributed across the globe to give every citizen an equal chance of admission... MXP looks as if all of the leftovers of East Germany's reconstruc- tion-whatever was needed to undo the deprivations of Communism-have been hurriedly bulldozed together according to a vaguely rectangular blueprint to form a botched sequence of deformed, inadequate spaces (apparently willed into being by the current rulers of Europe, who extort limitless Euros from the community's regional funds, causing endless delays for its duped taxpayers too busy on cell phones to notice). DFW is composed of three elements only, repeated ad infini- tum, nothing else: one kind of beam, one kind of brick, one kind of tile, all coated in the same color is it teal? Rust? Tobacco? With symmetries scaled beyond any possibility of recognition, the endless curve of its terminals forces its users to enact relativity theory in their quest for the gate. Its dropoff is the seem- ingly harmless beginning of a journey to the heart of unmitigated nothingness, beyond the animation provided by Pizza Hut, Dairy Queen... Valley cultures were thought to be the most resistant to Junkspace: at GVZ you can still see a universe of rules, order, hierarchy, neatness, coordination, poised moments before its implosion, but at ZHR huge "timepieces" hover in front of interior waterfalls as an essay in Regionaljunk. Duty-free is Junkspace; Junkspace is duty-free space. Where culture was thinnest, will it be the first to run out? Is emptiness local? Do wide open spaces demand wide open Junkspace? Sunbelt: huge populations where there was nothing; PHX: warpaint on every terminal, dead Indian outlines on every surface-carpet, wallpaper, napkins-like frogs flattened by car tires. Public Art distributed across LAX: the fish that have disappeared from our rivers return as public art in the concourse; only what is dead can be resurrected. Memory itself may have turned into Junkspace; only those murdered will be remembered. Deprivation can be caused by overdose or shortage; both conditions happen in Junkspace (often at the same time). Minimum is the ultimate ornament, a self- righteous crime, the contemporary Baroque. It does not signify beauty, but guilt. Its demonstrative earnestness drives whole civilizations into the welcoming arms of camp and kitsch. Ostensibly a relief from constant sensorial onslaught, mini- mum is maximum in drag, a stealth laundering of luxury; the stricter the lines, the more irresistible the seductions. Its role is not to approximate the sublime, but to minimize the shame of consumption, drain embarrassment, to lower what is higher. The minimum now exists in a state of parasitic codependency with the overdose: to have and not to have, craving and owning, finally collapsed in a sin- gle signifier... Museums are sanctimonious Junkspace; there is no sturdier aura than holiness. To accommodate the converts they have attracted by default, muse- ums massively turn "bad" space into "good" space; the more untreated the oak, the larger the profit center. Monasteries inflated to the scale of department stores: expansion is the Third Millennium's entropy, dilute or die. Dedicated to mostly respecting the dead, no cemetery would dare to reshuffle corpses as casually in the name of current expediency; curators plot hangings and unexpected encoun- ters in a donor--plate labyrinth with the finesse of the retailer: lingerie becomes "Nude, Action, Body," cosmetics "History, Memory, Society." All paintings based on black grids are herded together in a single white room. Large spiders in the humongous conversion offer delirium for the masses Narrative reflexes that have enabled us from the beginning of time to connect dots, fill in blanks, are now turned against us: we cannot stop noticing-no sequence is too absurd, trivial, meaningless, insulting... Through our ancient evolutionary equipment, our irre- pressible attention span, we helplessly register, provide insight, squeeze meaning, read intention; we cannot stop making sense out of the utterly sense- less On its triumphal march as content provider, art extends far beyond the museum's ever-increasing boundaries. Outside, in the real world, the "art planner" spreads Junkspace's fundamental incoherence by assigning defunct mythologies to residual surfaces and plotting three-dimensional works in leftover emptiness. Scouting for authenticity, his or her touch seals the fate of what was real, taps it for incorporation in Junkspace. Art galleries move en masse to "edgy" loca- tions, then convert raw space into white cubes... The only legitimate discourse is loss; art replenishes Junkspace in direct proportion to its own morbidity. We used to renew what was depleted; now we try to resurrect what is gone Outside, the architect's footbridge is rocked to the breaking point by a stampede of enthusias- tic pedestrians; the designer's initial audacity now awaits the engineer's application of dampers. Junkspace is a look-no-hands world... The constant threat of virtuality in Junkspace is no longer exorcized by petrochemical prod- ucts, plastic, vinyl or rubber; the synthetic cheapens. Junkspace has to exaggerate its claims to the authentic. Junkspace is like a womb that organizes the transition of endless quantities of the Real-stone, trees, goods, daylight, people-into the unreal. Entire mountains are dismembered to provide ever-greater quantities of authenticity, suspended on precarious brackets, polished to a blinding state of flash that renders the intended earnestness instantly elusive. Stone only comes in light yellow, flesh, a violent beige, a soaplike green, the colors of Communist plastics in the 1950s. Forests are felled, their wood all pale: maybe the origins of Junkspace go back to the kindergarten... ("Origins" is a mint shampoo that stings the anal region.) Color in the real world looks increasingly unreal, drained. Color in virtual space is luminous, therefore irresistible. A surfeit of reality-TV has made us into amateur guards monitoring a Junkuniverse From the lively breasts of the classical violinist to the designer stubble of the Big Brother outcast, the contextual pedophilia of the former revolutionary, the routine addictions of the stars, the runny makeup of the evangelist, the robotic body language of the conduc- tor, the dubious benefits of the fund-raising marathon, the futile explanations of the politician: the swooping movement of the TV camera suspended from its boom-an eagle without beak or claws, just an optical stomach-swallows images and confessions indiscriminately, like a trash bag, to propel them as cyber-vomit in space. TV-studio sets-garishly monumental-are both the culmination and the end of perspectival space as we've known it: angular geometric remnants invading starry infinities; real space edited for smooth transmission in virtual space, crucial hinge in an infernal feedback loop... the vastness of Junkspace extended to the edges of the Big Bang. Because we spend our life indoors-like animals in a zoo- we are obsessed with the weather: 40 percent of all TV consists of presenters of lesser attractiveness gesturing helplessly in front of windswept formations, through which you recognize, sometimes, your own destination/current posi- tion. Conceptually, each monitor, each TV screen is a substitute for a window; real life is inside, while cyberspace has become the great outdoors Mankind is always going on about architecture. What if space started looking at mankind? Will Junkspace invade the body? Through the vibes of the cell phone? Has it already? Through Botox injections? Collagen? Silicone implants? Liposuction? Penis enlargements? Does gene therapy announce a total reengineering according to Junkspace? Is each of us a mini-construction site? Is mankind the sum of three to five billion individual upgrades? Is it a repertoire of reconfiguration that facilitates the intromission of a new species into its self-made Junksphere?

Words by REM KOOLHAS, originally published in October, Vol. 100, Obsolescence. (Spring, 2002), pp. 175–190.

The cosmetic is the new cosmic . . .



I Trawl the Megahertz
by PADDY MCALOON

I'm telling myself the story of my life
Stranger than song or fiction
We start with the joyful mysteries
Before the appearance of ether
Trying to capture the elusive
The farm where the crippled horses heal
The woods where autumn is reversed
And the longing for bliss in the arms
Of some beloved from the past
I said 'Your daddy loves you.'
I said 'Your daddy loves you very much...'
He just doesn't want to live with us anymore.'
The plane comes down behind enemy lines
And you don't speak the language
A girl takes pity on you
She is Mother Theresa walking among the poor
And her eyes have attained night vision
In an orchard, drenched in blue light
She changes your bandages and soothes you
All day her voice is balm
Then she lowers you into the sunset
Hers is the wing span of the quotidian angel
So her feet are sore from the walk
To the well of human kindness
But she gives you a name, and you grow into it
Whether a tramp of the low road or a prince
Riding through Wagnerian opera
You learn some, if not all, of the language
And these are the footsteps you follow
The tracks of impossible love

Twelve days in Paris, and I'm awaiting for life to start
In the lobby of the Hotel Charlemagne
They're hanging photographs
Of rap artists and minor royalty
All cigarettes have been air-brushed from these pictures
Making everyone a liar
And saving no-one from their folly
As proud as Lucifer, I do nothing to hide
My kerosene dress and flint eyes
Which one steady look, are able to restore
To these images their carcinogenic threat
So what if this is largely bravado?
I have only twelve days in Paris, and I'm waiting for life to start
I'm setting out my stall behind a sheet of dark hair
And you, the hostage of crazed hormones
Will be driven to say:
'I am the next poet laureate
And she's the cherry madonna
And all of the summer is hers.'
At first I don't notice you
Or the colour of your hair
Or your readiness to laugh
Or tying a shoelace
Or finding the pavement fascinating
When the comet thrills the sky
Ever the dull alchemist
I have before me all the neccesary elements
It is their combination that eludes me
Forgive me, I am sleepwalking
I am jangling along to some song of the moment
Suffering its sweetness
Now strong in its feeble approximation of starlight
Meanwhile there is a real world
Trains are late, doctors are breaking bad news
But I am living in a lullaby
You might be huddled in a doorway on the make
Or just getting by, but I don't see it
You are my one shot at glory
Soon I will read in your expression
Warmth, encouragement, assent
From an acorn of interest
I will cultivate whole forests of affection
I will analyse your gestures
Like centuries of scholars
Pouring over Jesus' words

I will carelessly discard
For I am careless, I'm shameless, and
'Mayday, Mayday, watch the needle leave the dial'
I am reckless, I am telling myself the story of my life

Soon, I will make you a co-conspirator
If I am dizzy I will call it rapture
If I am low I will attribute it to your absence
Noting your tidal effect upon my moods
Oblivious to the opinions of neighbours
I will bark at the moon like a dog
In short, I'm asking to be scalded
It is the onset of fever

Yesterday they took a census
Boasting, I said 'I live two doors down from joy.'
Today, bewildered and sarcastic, I phone them and ask
'Isn't it obvious? This slum is empty.'
Repeat after me: happiness is only a habit
I am listening to the face in the mirror
But I don't think I believe what she's telling me
Her words are modern, but her eyes have been weeping
In gardens and grottoes since the Middle Ages
This is the aftermath of fever
I cool the palms of my hands upon the bars
Of an imaginary iron gate
Only by an extreme act of will can I avoid
Becoming a character in a country song
'Lord, you gave me nothing, then you took it all away.'
These are the sorrowful mysteries
And I have to pay attention
In a chamber of my heart sits an accountant
He is frowning and waving red paper at me
I go to the window for air
I catch the scent of apples, I hunger for a taste
But I can't see the orchard for the rain

There are two ways of looking at this
The first is to accept that you are gone
And to light a candle at the shrine of amnesia
I could even cheat
In the subterranean world of anaesthetics
Sad white canoes are forever sailing downstream
In the early hours of the morning
'Tell the stars I'm coming, make them leave a space for me
Whether bones, or dust, or ashes...
Once among them I'll be free.'
It may make a glamorous song
But it's a dark train of thought with too many carriages

There is, of course
Another way of looking at this
'Your daddy loves you,' I said
'Your daddy loves you very much
He doesn't want to live with us anymore.'
I am telling myself the story of my life

I Trawl the Megahertz
by PADDY MCALOON

By day and night
Fancy electronic dishes are trained on the heavens
They are listening for smudged echoes of the moment of creation
They are listening for the ghost of a chance
They may help us make sense of who we are and where we came from
And, as a compassionate side effect
Teach us that nothing is ever lost

So, I rake the sky
I listen hard
I trawl the megahertz
But the net isn't fine enough, and I miss you
A swan sailing between two continents
A ghost immune to radar

Still, my eyes are fixed upon the place I last saw you
Your signal urgent but breaking
Before you became cotton in a blizzard
A plane coming down behind enemy lines









“truth from the>void<”

“truth from the>chaos<”

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“state of (excess)



“state of (uncertainty)

“it is a thousand ways of images being somewhere else. before writing, there is reality.”

Words by JEAN-PAUL FARGIER,
Excerpts from “Dust In The Eye”

I push my daughter (two years old) in the stroller designed to take her on walks: this is cinema. My daughter pushes the empty stroller: this is video. The stroller is empty. It must be acknowledged, one must resign oneself: video is not a way of being of reality, it is a thousand ways of images being somewhere else. Before writing, there is reality. For if we do not write reality, what is it that we trace? The Wind. And precisely the question of reality in video does not arise in the same way, for example, as in cinema. It no longer arises. In fact, in video, reality is no longer a problem. In cinema, the question is always whether a film has achieved it, captured it, reproduced it, revealed it (if possible, as never before, as if for the first time). In video, reality never shows up for the rendezvous because it is not what we are waiting for. It is there, but always disguised, unrecognizable, beneath layers of overlapping fantasies. Here or not, at this point, it’s the same thing. We no longer pay attention. However, it interests us—and we cannot help but notice its attire, its posture, its costume.

The stroller is empty but moves forward. And once it’s acknowledged that it is empty, we focus on observing its appearance: sinuous, syncopated, disturbing. The child’s arms, stretched out to reach the handlebars, draw our attention.

By the way, this stroller is not as empty as it seems. In carrying no child, it carries all children. They are there, tangled together, not only Alice, as she imagines herself and as I imagine her, but also the doll that could replace her, her expected but dreaded little brother or sister, including all the children we have never crossed paths with, whether in strollers or on foot, and all those we will never meet from every country in the world, in a virtuous state. And still, all those adults who covet this emptiness and fill it with a memory, a longing, a dream of regression. It’s an entire world! But not much reality. A swarm of images will never make a drop of honey. But it might make a beautiful concerto.

(...)

For to compel the real to present itself, even if only in the lapse of a lightning flash, it is not enough to break the frame as a homogeneous content; it is necessary to break time as continuous development. Still images, slow motion, accelerated motion (and we also accelerate an image by multiplying within it the things to be seen): everything serves to escape the effect of 24 frames per second, an effect that consists of creating the illusion of continuity of movement through a succession of still images. Here, we prefer to lay a trap for movement—through its traces, its fiery trails—within a still image. We navigate below that ideal, idealizing speed upon which all cinema rests.

(...)

Dust in the eyes, this imbalance? Yes, but like a shot that explodes between and within each image. And whose noise prevents us from harmonizing what is given as fragments (of a life, of an art, of a world, of a soul). There it is.And what became of the stroller in all this? Alice—with a name like that, we are suddenly transported to the other side of the narrative—has two ways of pushing her empty stroller. Most of the time, she dedicates herself to steering this oversized vehicle straight, as if she were seated and I were pushing her. It seems to me that here she is making analog video. On the other hand, when she charges the stroller toward pigeons, distant before her, I get the impression she dreams of digital video and imagines her stroller, escaping, will then fly after the pigeons, triumphant like them, for an instant, the time of a wingbeat (nothing but zero and one), far from earthly attraction and all its cortege of consequences. As we know, analog video, as much as digital video, possesses the property of freeing the image (and the bodies it inscribes) from weight. This is the grace I wish upon you. Amen.

[...] Garage sales are vernacular forms in which suburbanites, primarily, set out a number of cast-off items in or in front of their garages, put up signs, and hope that people will browse and buy. As a city dweller I had never heard of these until I moved to Southern California, where where they are a highly popular, even beloved, pastime. Coming from a culture in which one donates unwanted items to charity or sets them on the street, I saw the garage sale as a brief portrait of suburban society, in which the hope of cashing-in on cast-offs, so that one might go out and consume again,, led people unabashedly to expose their material lives to the scrutiny of others. I saw it as an art form of contemporary American society and determined to create such a sale in an art gallery. The first one I organized took place in the gallery of the University of San Diego in 1973. My sale included unlikely items, such as empty boxes and welfare-commodity containers, private letters and photos, cast-off underwear, girlie magazines, dead landscaping materials, broken household items and a notebook listing the names of men. The gallery was arranged so that the brightest lighting and the best items were at the front, and the questionable, less saleable, more personal, and even salacious items were located further back as the lighting progressively diminished, leading finally to the empty containers and other abject items. A tape recorder played a 'meditation' by the garage sale 'persona' I had adopted - dressed in a long-skirted hippie costume wondering aloud what the Garage Sale represents and quoting Marx on the commodity form. A projector showed images of blonde middle-class families, at home and on trips, on slides bought at a local garage sale of the effects of a dead man. A blackboard bore the phrase, 'Maybe the Garage Sale is a metaphor for the mind. I advertised the sale in the local art community but, more importantly, in the free Pennysaver newspaper,, which brought a mixed audience to the week-long sale. Restaging this sale in various countries, and in New York in conjunction with my retrospective [2000](#), I hypothesized, correctly, that in the presence of a bargain, most people, including those who came to visit an artwork, would ignore the quite audible tape recording and the slides. [...] The piece has become less organized by the original principles of ordering, and there is much less 'sentimental' material such as old personal letters and iconic baby items (partly because the culture of the throw-away is much less likely to sentimentalize baby shoes). The audience in the earliest days was divided; the ordinary shoppers were intrigued at such a sale in a gallery but not overly troubled or driven to philosophizing, and the art shoppers felt they were in a great conspiracy to tweak the noses of those who found such ordinary things as garage sales to be too low for an art gallery. Today, the ordinary people have the same reaction as ever, but the art public is jubilant and unapologetic, because ART is now supposed to be FUN! The only surprise seems to be that things really are available at bargain prices, so they don't even have to pay extra to share in the joke. [...] By its nature the Garage Sale cannot be a historical work because commerce is always located in the present.

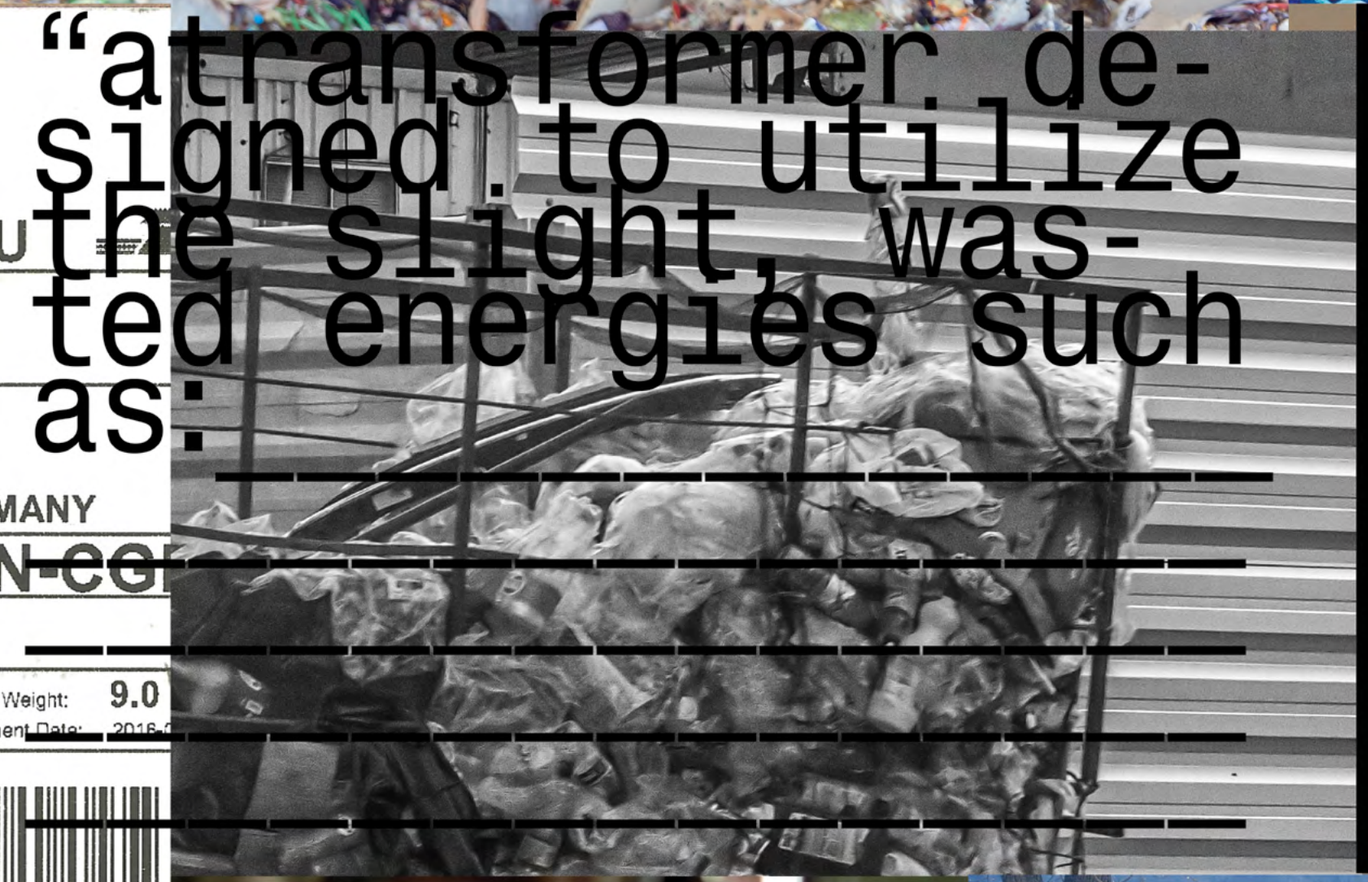
MARTHA ROSLER, excerpts from 'THE GARAGE SALE IS A METAPHOR FOR THE MIND: A Conversation between Martha Rosler and Jens Hoffmann', in Martha Rosler, London Garage Sale (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 2005) 5-6.

...“metaphors.....for”the”mind”

“still?life?”

42

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“atransformer designed to utilize the slight, wasted energies such as:







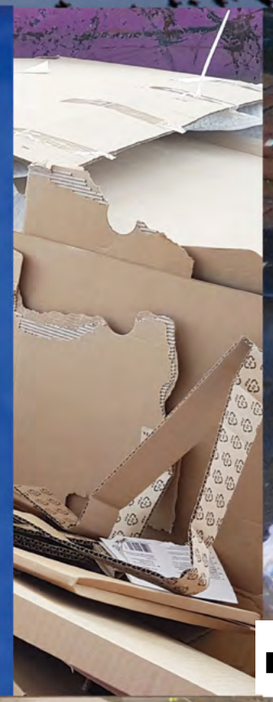
“infra-slim”

A transformer designed to utilize the slight, wasted energies such as:
the excess of pressure on an electric switch
the exhalation of tobacco smoke
the growth of a head of hair, of other body hair and of the nails the fall of urine and excrement
movements of fear, astonishment, boredom, anger
laughter dropping of tears
demonstrative gestures of hands, feet, nervous tics
forbidding glances
falling over with surprise
stretching, yawning, sneezing
ordinary spitting and of blood
vomiting
ejaculation
unruly hair, cowlicks
the sound of nose-blowing, snoring
fainting
whistling, singing sighs,
etc. [...]

MARCEL DUCHAMP
in Notes on the Infra-Slim (c. 1945)



nist> {mentality<





45

Americans will waste $10.1B on unwanted holiday gifts — and 53% will get a disappointing present These 4 simple tips will burn more calories — you don't even need to go to the gym Ocean Plastic Is Getting Worse and Efforts to Stem the Tide Fall Short, Study Finds The Oceans Are Being Clogged with Plastic. Here's One Way to Fight This Ecological Catastrophe We Depend on Plastic. Now We're Drowning in It. "Satellites Could Be Put to Work Tracking Ocean Trash" "Driving an EV? Big Oil Hopes You Don't Cut Down on Plastic Too" "California Sues Exxon, Alleges Plastics Deception" "The Scion of the Ziploc Empire Is on a Crusade to Rein In Plastic Waste" "Plastics Treaty Negotiators Meet in Busan in Hopes of Reaching Compromise" "The Oceans Are Being Clogged with Plastic. Here's One Way to Fight This Ecological Catastrophe." "Mountains of Trash: The Growing Garbage Crisis in U.S. Cities" "America's Overflowing Landfills: A National Emergency" "The Atacama Desert: Where Fast Fashion Goes to Die" "Overflowing Cities: The Urban Trash Dilemma" "From Luxury to Landfill: Fashion Capitals Face Waste Challenges" "The Atacama's Hidden Pollution Problem: Discarded Clothing Waste" "City Streets or Dumping Grounds? The Growing Urban Trash Crisis" "New York's Mounting Trash Problem: Can the City Keep Up? "The Future of Waste: Can Cities Adapt to Growing Challenges?" "Milan's Struggle with Waste Disposal: A Growing Concern" "Paris Faces Sanitation Crisis Amid Ongoing Labor Disputes" "New York's Trash Tipping Point: Infrastructure Under Pressure" "Earth's Resources Under Strain: The Impact of Modern Consumption"

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>a>connection





“aggregation”

“Recycling Myths Debunked: Why Much of Our Waste Isn’t Recycled” “Waste Not, Want Not: Rethinking Our Consumption Habits” “The Unsustainable Pace of Global Resource Consumption”“Parisian Streets Overflow as Waste Workers Strike Continues” “Trash Troubles: How Major Cities Are Managing Waste Crises” “Planet at Breaking Point: The Environmental Toll of Overconsumption” “Recycling Failures: Why Our Waste Keeps Piling Up













the plastic soup

The largest floating garbage patch in the world is located in the Pacific Ocean, stretching from Japan to Hawaii. According to Charles Moore, an American oceanographer who discovered the phenomenon, as explained to The Independent, the non-biodegradable debris remains concentrated due to ocean currents, approximately 500 nautical miles off the coast of California.

"Initially, people thought it was an island of plastic waste, something you could almost walk on. But it's not quite like that. It's more like a plastic soup," explains Marcus Eriksen, a researcher at the Algalita Marine Research Foundation. Oceanographer Curtis Ebbesmeyer compares the floating garbage patch to a living organism. "It moves like a giant animal." When it reaches land, particularly in the Hawaiian archipelago, the beaches are left covered in trash. According to the online edition of the newspaper, about one-fifth of the debris originates from discharges from ships and oil platforms, while the rest comes from land. Moore discovered the garbage patch in 1997 while participating in a regatta between Los Angeles and Hawaii, in an area with minimal ocean circulation due to weak winds. Yesterday, he warned that unless consumers reduce their plastic waste, the patch could double in size within the next ten years. David Karl, an oceanographer at the University of Hawaii, says there is "no reason to doubt" the Algalita Foundation but argues that more studies are needed on the extent and nature of the "plastic soup." Karl is preparing an expedition to the site later this year. According to the UN, plastic waste is responsible for the deaths of over one million seabirds and more than 100,000 marine mammals each year.





a sense of being
immersed—even
lost—in data.
to provide an
overarching
narrative

}window shopping{

52

53

information
overload

world-as-receiver

What ancestor speaks in me? I can't live simultaneously in my head and in my body. That's why I can't be just one person. I can feel within myself countless things at once.
There are no great masters left. That's the real evil of our time. The heart's path is covered in shadow. We must listen to the voices that seem useless in brains full of long sewage pipes of school wall, tarmac and welfare papers. The buzzing of insects must enter. We must fill the eyes and ears of all of us with things that are the beginning of a great dream. Someone must shout that we'll build the pyramids. It doesn't matter if we don't. We must fuel that wish and stretch the corners of the soul like an endless sheet. If you want the world to go forward, we must hold hands. We must mix the so-called healthy with the so-called sick. You healthy ones! What does your health mean? The eyes of all mankind are looking at the pit into which we are plunging. Freedom is useless if you don't have the courage to look us in the eye, to eat, drink and sleep with us! It's the so-called healthy who have brought the world to the verge of ruin. Man, listen! In you water, fire and then ashes, and the bones in the ashes. The bones and the ashes!
Where am I when I'm not in reality or in my imagination? Here's my new pact: it must be sunny at night and snowy in August. Great things end. Small things endure. Society must become united again instead of so disjointed. Just look at nature and you'll see that life is simple. We must go back to where we were, to the point where we took the wrong turn. We must go back to the main foundations of life without dirtying the water. What kind of world is this if a madman tells you you must be ashamed of yourselves!
O Mother! The air is that light thing that moves around your head and becomes clearer when you laugh.

Domenico's speech in NOSTALGHIA (1983), a film written and directed by ANDREI TARKOVSKY

I experience surprise not difficult to identify: "the viewer browsed around, forever waiting for the artist to arrive in some authorial form to tell her how it fit together. This is what it feels like to be alone with information: awash in abundance, forever waiting for the connection to go through, confronted with the generous and endlessly frustrating opportunity to make sense of matter."

Import/Export

Tuesday, 31 December 2024, 11:59 PM

n.9 „<still life?>“

THE-ICONOMIST © “TO CONSUME” “TO WASTE”